(iv) excise duty on compact discs be waived as in the case of pre-recorded cassettes in order to deprive manufacturers of pirated CDs of an unfair price advantage;

(v) extending the benefits of Section 80-IA of the Income Tax Act, 1961 to cinema halls and multiplexes set up within the country;

(vi) benefits of new Section 80HHF, announced in the Budget for 1999-2000, to be made applicable to proprietors, individuals etc. engaged in the export of entertainment software as well and with retrospective effect from 01.4.89.

Price hike of Employment News

†1171. SHRI RAMJI LAL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) Whether it is a fact that price of weekly publications Employment News and Rozgar Samachar has been increased from Rs. 3 to Rs. 5 with effect from 6th February, 1999;

(b) Whether it is also a fact that the said weekly is mainly read by the unemployed persons; and

(c) If so, the justification of the said price hike?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITELY): (a) Yes.

(b) It is also read by the unemployed youth.

(c) The price has been hiked to offset production cost.

Closure of song and drama division at Manipur

1172. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Song and Drama Division at Manipur is going to be closed;

(b) by when the vacant post of Assistant Director in the Division will be filled up; and

(c) the reasons for keeping the post vacant for so long?

†Original Notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITELY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) There is no vacant post of Assistant Director in the Song and Drama Division at Manipur.

(c) Does not arise.

Functioning of PIB, Imphal

1173. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the PIB, Imphal is not functioning as smoothly as it was before transfer of the then AIO;

(b) the reasons for not filling up the post of AIO; and

(c) the staff strength in the bureau, alongwith the vacancy position?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITELY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) An officer has been posted as AIO, Imphal.

(c) PIB, Imphal has a sanctioned strength of 20 posts. At present, only one post, of Information Assistant, is vacant.

Constitution of Punjab Wakf Board

1174. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state.

(a) as to why Government have not constituted Punjab Wakf Board;

(b) whether Government are aware that they have given an assurance to constitute the Board early;

(c) whether Government would constitute the Board within a time-frame; and

(d) how Government will justify their action in terms of Section 99 of the Wakf Act?